

A true Narrative of the manner how

The Daughters and Heires of Sr. Peter Vanlore the younger were disinherited

of the estate of the Lady Powell their Aunt; by Tho. Levingston, Esq; and Ann his Wife, and others their Complices, by the procuring the Fines and Deeds, from the Lady Powell, now complained of in Parliament, and under the consideration of this Honourable House.



R. Peter Vanlore the Elder, having issue onely one Son, viz. the said Sr. Peter the younger, and foure Daughters, viz. the Lady Powell, the Lady Glenham, the Lady Cesar, and Mrs. Vandenbendon; Did in the third Year of the late King *Charles* of blessed memory, settle the Castle and parks of the *Devises* in *Wiltshire*, worth Six Hundred pound *per Annum*, and the Fifth part of divers other his Mannours & Lands, worth Two Thousand Five Hundred pound *per Annum*, upon the said Lady Powell his Daughter, and the Heirs of her body; And for Default of such Issue, on his own right Heirs, being the Daughters of young Sr. Peter, and Entailed the said Fifth part of his other Lands (for Default of Issue, of the Lady Powell, upon the said Daughters, and other of his Grandchildren by name, and dyed,

Sir Edward Powell Husband of the said Lady, and Thomas Levingston, who had Married Ann Cesar, a Niece of the Lady Powell, having for divers years before the Lady Powell's death, used severall single unlawfull means and practises, to procure the said Lady to dispose of her said estate to themselves, being able by their single practises, to prevaile therein; the Lady alwayes expressing her self, that she would never alter her Fathers Settlement, the said Sr. Edward Powell thereupon left her Company, and for fifteen years together never came at her; And the Lady was so displeased with the said Levingston and his Wife, for the said practises, that she was unwilling they should come near her; and would very unwillingly speake before them, saying, *They came but to betray her.*

But the said Lady about September 1651. lying very sick at Chelsey, of the sicknesse whereof she soon after dyed; The said Confederates hearing thereof, apprehended that now an opportunity was offered to them to effect their designes; and get the Ladies estate. To which purpose, joyning all together, upon or about the seventh day of the said September, the said Sir Edward Powell, Mr. Levingston and his Wife, William Hynson alias Powell, a Nephew of the said Sir Edward, now a member of Parliament, then a Justice of Peace of *Middlesex* together with severall other persons, did forceably enter into the said Ladies House, where she then lay sick; and where she had for many years lived, separate from the said Sir Edward, as aforesaid, and guarded and secured the same with Armed-men, caused all the Ladies servants to be Arrested, and violently taken away from her without Bail, upon false and feigned Actions of many thousand pounds, which they never prosecuted but became *Non-suite* therein; And then they chained up the Doores of the said House, and in warlike manner kept it; And the nearest Friends and Kindred of the said Lady, from that time dyed, telling through the Ladies servants, that they should never see her face more: And Mrs. Levingston told the Lady, that all her friends had forsaken her, engaging their Confederates to secrecie and fidelity by Rings of Gold given to them, with this Motto inscribed (*Never to be forgotten or requited*) and placed strange servants (whom the Lady knew not, and against her will) to attend her in her last sicknesse; and tearing least the said Lady should make any discovery of their wicked doings from her Chamber window (which opened into a Neighbours ground adjoining) they forbade that Neighbour to permit any of the said Ladies friends to come into that ground, or stand neere the House; They having thus by force and practise secluded all but themselves: Upon the 18. of the said September, they brought Justice Warburton (who knew not the said Lady) to the said House, and there procured the said Lady (as the Judge Certifies, to Leavy severall Fines of the said Castle, Parkes and premises; which Fines as the said Confederates pretends were declared by some Writings, sealed by the Lady to be to the Use of Sir Edward Powell, Levingston and his Wife; And the said Lady Powell did about that time (also as they affirm) dispose a great personall estate, which was the said old Sir Peters, to the said Levingston and his Wife, although the said Lady did utter detest them, as persons of a most evill and dangerous conversation, and oftentimes hath been heard to wish the said Ann Levingston were not of her kindred.

That the said Confederates suspecting as they had cause, the sudden death of the said Lady Powell (who dyed on the 6th. of October following) might render all their plots ineffectuall; They procured the said Fines to be made Fines, as *firmity* Term before; and yet doubting all these plots would not hold (wickedness filling them with fear of discovery) they produced a paper of the said Mr. Levingstons hand Writing, pretending to be subscribed by the said Lady, intimating her well pleasednesse with her condition; although upon or very near that day, the said paper was pretended to be subscribed, the said Lady did publicly rebuke the said Mrs. Levingston and affirm, that their plot was to disinherit the right Heirs of her Lands, but that she would be torn in pieces with wilde Horses before she would doe it; And the said Certificate is a thing so altogether unusuall and full of suspicion, that the Judges of the *Common Pleas* in dislike thereof, in open Court told the said Levingston, he had over acted his part; and upon examination of the matters aforesaid, did several times openly expresse themselves against the foulness of this practise; but said, the said Fines were so far proceeded in, that it was past their Power by the ordinary course of their Court to Relieve the Heirs against them. But said this matter would sound ill in the ears of a High Court of Parliament, and worse in the High Court of Heaven: And the Parliament who sat in 1651. upon consideration hereof excepted this businesse out of the Act of General Pardon.

Sir Edward Powell not long after was cut off by death; and the said Levingston and his Wife, designing to keep by Power, what they had so unjustly gotten: They did transerre their Interest in the premises to Richard Cromwell Esquire, and other potent Persons in those times; by whose Influence and personall Solicitation, things were so carried in the Court of *Chancery* (where the Heires preferred their Bill for a discovery, of the plots and practises aforesaid) That their Bill was dismissed, and the Confederates never put to Answer the same; and the Confederates by the Protection and Assistance of their aforesaid potent Patrons, have hitherto been secure in their Acts of Unrighteousnesse and Oppression.